

the Falstaff of the piece, which is despicable, and full of ribaldry and Impiety from the first scene to the last.—
 Secondly, because Shakspeare seems to have taken not a few hints from it, for it comprehends, in some measure, the story of the two parts of Henry IV. as well as of Henry V. and no ignorance, I think, could debase the gold of Shakspeare into such dross; though no chemistry but that of Shakspeare could exalt such base metal into gold.—When the Prince of Wales, in Henry IV. calls Falstaff "my old lad of the Castle," it is probably but a sneering allusion to the deserved fate which this performance met with; for there is no proof that our poet was ever obliged to change the name of Oldcastle into that of Falstaff, though there is an absolute certainty that this piece must have been condemned by any audience before whom it was ever represented.—
 Lastly, because it appears (as Dr. Farmer has observed) from the *Jests* of the famous comedian, Tarlton, 4to. 1611, that he had been particularly celebrated in the part of the Clown *, in Henry V. and though this character does not exist in our play, we find it in the other, which, for the reasons already enumerated, I suppose to have been prior to this.

This anonymous play of Henry V. is neither divided into Acts or scenes, is uncommonly short, and has all the appearance of having been imperfectly taken down during the representation. As much of it appears to have been omitted, we may suppose that the author did not think it convenient for his reputation to publish a more ample copy.

There is, indeed, a play called Sir John Oldcastle, published in 1600, with the name of William Shakspeare prefixed to it. The prologue being very short, I shall quote it, as it serves to prove that a former piece, in which the character of Oldcastle was introduced, had given great offence:

"The doubtful title (gentlemen) prefixt
 Upon the argument we have in hand,
 May breed suspense, and wrongfully
 disturb
 The peaceful quiet of your settled thoughts.

* Mr. Oldys, in a manuscript note in his copy of Langbaine, says, that Tarleton appeared in the character of the Judge who receives the box on the ear. This Judge is likewise a character in the old play. I may add, on the authority of the books at Stationers* Hall, that Tarleton published what he called his

Farewell, a ballad, in Sept. 1588. In Oct. 1589,
was entered
** Tarleton's Repentance, and his Farewell to his
Friends in his
Sickness a little before his Death;" in 1590, "
Tarleton's
Newes out of Purgatorie;" and in the same year, "
A pleasaunt
Dittv Dialogue-wise, between Tariton's Ghost and
Robyn Good-
fellowe." STBEVENS.